

K. Burn (Andrew) Major General

SECOND

A D D R E S S

TO THE

PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN:

CONTAINING

A NEW, AND MOST POWERFUL ARGUMENT

TO

ABSTAIN FROM THE USE

OF

WEST INDIA SUGAR.

BY AN EYE WITNESS TO THE FACTS RELATED.

THE SECOND EDITION, ENLARGED.

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P R E F A C E.

THE idea of presenting this Address to the Public, was first suggested by the following circumstance. The Author a few evenings ago, conversing with some select friends, employed all his rhetoric to prevail on them to abstain from the use of Sugar; but finding that neither motives of humanity nor conscience were sufficient to effect his purpose, he gave the contest up; till one or two of the female part of the company, knowing he had been some time resident on a Sugar Plantation in the West-Indies, begged he would favour them with a short account of the Process of making it. A request which he instantly complied with; and as he drew near the close of his narrative, describing the manner in which the Negroes stamp it in the Hoghead, he could easily perceive an alteration in the complexion of one of his fair hearers; and as he proceeded, knit Brows, distorted Features, and disgustful Emotions, were visible in all their Countenances; till one, unable to stand it out any longer, exclaimed with the most determined resolution, "Well! I'll never eat another bit of Sugar so long as I live." It immediately struck the Author, that some such powerful motive, that would affect the Senses, might be more efficacious with many, in constraining them to leave off Sugar, than those arguments which are only sentimental. He has therefore taken the liberty to lay before the People of England at large, what he found so effectual to gain his purpose among his own acquaintance; and makes no doubt, when it is considered that the Fact itself, with all its concomitant circumstances, is consistent with the strictest truth, it will prove equally successful with them.

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S E C O N D

A D D R E S S, &c.

IT cannot but afford a peculiar pleasure, to the truly benevolent mind, to hear that so many families, public societies, and thousands of individuals, have at least *aimed* at the abolition of the Slave Trade, by their determined resolution to abstain from West India Sugar and Rum. What the Wisdom of a British Senate could not effect, the worthy Author of a late Address to the Public, is likely to accomplish, by rousing to powerful exertions, those sentiments of humanity, which it is to be hoped, are more or less implanted in every breast.

My design in the following pages, is to tread in a very different path from him; and to excite every opposite *emotions* in the breasts of my Readers; yet all tending, I hope, to promote the same sacred Cause of Humanity, by presenting to their view, a most powerful motive to induce them to leave off the use of West India Sugar. But before I proceed to accomplish this, it may not perhaps be deemed an unnecessary digression, to address myself first to their feelings, by just mentioning two or three plain facts, respecting the sufferings of the Slaves in the West Indies, which I have never yet seen published; and which have come within the

circle of my own knowledge, while resident on a Sugar Plantation in Jamaica. Such as the common practice of chaining them together by the leg, for very trifling offences, at the caprice of a Bashaw or an Overseer; and in that situation, obliging them for days and weeks together, to accomplish the same work in the field, under Egyptian Task-masters, as if their feet were at perfect liberty.

The tender Mother with her sucking Infant tied to her shoulders, is obliged to work equally hard, as if she carried no such burden. And when the hardened Wretch of a Driver cuts his dreadful whip across her back, of which he is not sparing, we cannot suppose him always so dexterous, as to avoid touching at times, the harmless Innocent at the breast. Think on this, ye Mothers who use Sugar!

I have myself seen the poor offending Slave, flogged in such a horrid, cruel manner, as really baffles all description, and immediately after the dreadful operation, fastened with both Legs in the Stocks, for days and nights together; while his raw back has been constantly washed with the strongest brine; putting him to the most excruciating torments. Yet in spite of all this precaution to prevent putrefaction, through the heat of the climate, the vermin has made such deep inroads into his mangled flesh, that to preserve his miserable life a few years longer, other Slaves have been employed to pick out the large Maggots, that had already penetrated to the very bone; and who frequently half eat up their dying victim, before the other half is laid in the Dust.

In vain is it urged as an argument against the truth of this cruel treatment, that no Proprietor of a Slave, would be such a fool, as wantonly to destroy his own property? The argument is good in itself; but the evil lays here; that neither the Overseer, the Book keeper, nor the Negro
Driver,

Driver, the sole perpetrators of these horrid cruelties, have the smallest interest in the Slave, or the profits of his labour ; and therefore put no more value on his life, than they do on that of a Cock or a Hen among their poultry : And perhaps not so much.

I shall beg leave to mention one Fact more, which affected my own feeling above every thing I met with in the West Indies. I mean the shocking custom of exposing to Sale on market-days, the sick and dying Negroes. The inhuman Proprietor finding he can expect nothing more from the labour of his Slave, and unwilling to run the risk of a Doctor's bill, where there's little hope of recovery, chooses rather to expose him to Sale, at the solemn moment when he is just ready to launch into Eternity ; with a view to dispose of his expiring breath, for a few Shillings ; there being always plenty of purchasers on these occasions, who, from schemes of speculation, generally buy a Lot of such miserable Beings ; half of whom perhaps they get home alive ; and if but one out of the whole, by proper care, is saved to exist a few more wretched years, the Purchaser probably has made a good Bargain, especially if it is a native Slave.

In addition to what I have already mentioned from my own observation, I cannot forbear inserting an instance of the most unparalleled barbarity that perhaps ever disgraced the annals of human nature, extracted from the abstract of the evidence before the House of Commons, page 42. " Mr. Isaac Parker relates, that in the Guinea Ship he was in, there was a Slave child, of nine months old, which refused to eat, for which the Captain took it up in his hand, and flogg'd it with a cat, saying, " D—n you, I'll make *you* eat or I'll kill you." The same child having swell'd feet, the captain order'd them to be put into water, *though the ship's Cook told him it was too hot.* This

brought off the skin and nails. He then ordered sweet oil and cloths, which Isaac Parker himself applied to its feet; and as the child at mess time again refus'd to eat, the Captain again took it up and flogg'd it, and tied a log of mango wood, of twelve or thirteen pounds weight, round its neck by way of punishment. He repeated the flogging for four days together at mess time. The last time of flogging he let it drop out of his hand, with the same expression as before, and accordingly in about three quarters of an hour the child died. He then call'd its mother to heave it overboard, and beat her for refusing. He however forced her to take it up and go to the ship's side, *where holding her head* on one side to avoid the sight, she dropp'd her child overboard, and cried for many hours after." Can there possibly be a heart so obdurate as not to feel at such a horrid scene as this? or after such a well attested fact can we doubt of the many thousand species of cruelties exercised on the unhappy Negroe? I have myself seen two men Slaves hung on separate gibbets, in iron cages, made on purpose, and there left to perish with hunger and thirst. The one lived five days, and the other six, as may be easily conceived in the greatest misery, and their only crime was, what I trust will ever characterise a true Englishman, an irresistible love of liberty.—

But I must now proceed to exhibit what I deem another very powerful motive, to induce my readers to abstain, at least from what is called soft or moist Sugar. But if in doing this, I should offend their delicacy, by occasioning some very uneasy, and disagreeable sensations, they will be so kind as recollect, that it is only in this way I can expect to succeed in my main design.

It is evident beyond a doubt, that the Consumers of Sugar and Rum, innocent or guilty, are actually the first

and moving cause of all those torrents of Blood and Sweat, that annually flow from the body of the poor African.

Take away the cause, and we all know the effect will cease. Abstain from Sugar, and Slavery falls. The consequence is as clear as the noon-day Sun; yet how difficult to persuade some, that when they eat Sugar, they figuratively eat the Blood of the Negro. This task I leave for others to accomplish; my business at present is, by plain matters of fact, of which I have frequently had ocular demonstration, to convince the inhabitants of Great Britain, who use Soft Sugar, either in Puddings, Pies, Tarts, Tea, or otherwise, that they literally, and most certainly in so doing, eat large quantities of that last mentioned Fluid, as it flows copiously from the Body of the laborious Slave, toiling under the scorching rays of a vertical sun, mixed with many other savory ingredients, which shall be hereafter mentioned.

There will be no need to go through the whole Process of making Sugar from the juice of the cane. That would take up more paper and time than I am willing to allow; my intention being only to describe minutely, the manner in which it is packed in the Hoghead after it is made.—When a sufficient quantity has stood in the Pots the usual time to drain off the Molasses, and the Overseer is hurried by the Agent in Town, to get the Produce of the Plantation shipped off; it is brought out of the Sugar house on Negroe's shoulders, and emptied from the Pots into the Hoghead; into which two or three stout fellows, nearly, or altogether naked, are immediately placed, to tread it down with their feet, as it is thrown in; constantly labouring with all their might, till the Cask is full. Now lest I should exaggerate the matter myself, I will leave it wholly to my Readers to determine the quantity of the foremen-
tioned

tioned fluid that may reasonably be supposed to flow from the Bodies of these three men, almost in contact with each other, toiling hard under a sultry Sun, till relieved by others. I can only say, it is good for the person who superintends this work, (as I have frequently done) to keep a little to windward of the dancing Blacks; for the nauseous effluvia emitted from them by excessive Perspiration, is almost insupportable. This indeed may evaporate during the exportation home, but the warm stream from whence it proceeds, is evidently all absorbed among the Sugar; for nothing is more common than to observe little hard lumps among it, of a darker hue than the rest; now whether this is wholly owing to the disgusting moisture I have mentioned, or partly to be attributed to the remains of Molosses among the Sugar, I will not take upon me positively to determine; though I should rather imagine it was a mixture of both. But one thing I think, must be very evident to all my Readers, that every Hoghead of Sugar thus packed and imported into England from the West Indies, is more or less impregnated with this liquid from the human body.

There are also many other disagreeable ingredients, which with great propriety, we may suppose to be mixed with it. For instance, it is well known, that the woolly head of the Negro, is as fertile in the propagation of a certain domestic insect, as the flaxen locks of the European. Is it then any ways strange to conceive, that while the labouring Slave, perspiring at every pore, with his head as wet as Gideon's first fleece, jumping in the cask with all his might, some of this numerous race, who inhabit the Capital, may inadvertently lose their hold, and fall in among the Sugar; or be carried there with the large drops as they fall from his reeking locks? What more probable than this? And though it may be a difficult matter, to perceive so small an
Insect,

Insect, in so large a Mass, yet that's no proof, but that there may be many of them secreted there; and that the consumers of Sugar, must of course consume some of their dried carcases.

Another ingredient still more nauseous than the former, we may also very rationally suppose to be mixed with the soft Sugar; and that is, a very disgusting fluid, of various colours, arising from a disorder called the Yaws; chiefly incident to the African race, something like the King's Evil, and almost universally breaks out in the legs and feet, and is seldom or ever thoroughly cured. Now, I will not take upon me to say, that every Negro, who stamps in the Hoghead, has this disorder in his feet; but I'll be bold to affirm, that many get in there, who most certainly have it; as the Slaves on every Plantation, in crop time, are divided into Watches, and Gangs, and relieve one another at their work; and there are few among them, that are entirely free from this disorder: And though I would not presume to say, that an Overseer, or a Book-keeper, or even a Negro Driver, would be so indelicate, as to order a Slave into the Hoghead, if he saw it was *spring tide* at his ancles, yet I am also very confident that none of these Gentlemen are over-nice in this *matter*, as they well know they shall never taste of the Sugar into which it drops, and therefore look more for the labour of the Slave, than at the cleanliness of his feet.

If delicacy would permit, I could mention many other scrophulous disorders, to which the Negro race are much more subject than we are in Europe, with the addition of that well-known, but offensive substance, usually lodged between the human toes, and under the nails; but from what has been just advanced, I make no doubt, but many of my Readers have already begun to call me ugly names; make wry faces; and nauseate the very idea of Sugar. If so, I shall

shall be heartily glad, for then it may be hoped, they will never eat another bit, so long as a slave exists to dance in a Hoghead. And that they may all be brought to make this resolution, I can safely assure them, that I am only relating plain simple facts that have frequently come under my own observation. But lest I should tire them with too many of this disagreeable kind, I will only mention one more, and then have done.

Every body who has been any time in the West Indies, must be well acquainted with the nature of that small Insect called the Jigger; that imperceptibly works its way into the feet and toes of almost every inhabitant on these Islands: Not even the covered feet of the delicate Creole are exempt from it. Many a one have I with pain extracted from my own. It is first perceived by a violent itching; and when that part is closely examined, a small bag, about the size of a garden pea, filled with a whitish liquor, in which the Insect swims, is found just under the skin; and if this bag is not carefully extracted, without breaking, every toe on the foot will presently become a perfect honey-comb; and as this operation cannot be performed, without occasioning little oozing sores, they become for a time very troublesome to the poor Negro, few of whom are exempt from this plague: But during the Crop Season, the period at which the Jigger is most common, as our Harvest Bugs are in England, those Slaves who are ordered to work in the Hoghead, enjoy the advantage of having their wounds sufficiently cleansed, at least twice a day, while they are obliged to dance a long and fatiguing Jig among the Sugar.

With regard to what is called Lump or Loaf Sugar, we all know it is nothing else than the other refined; and were the secrets of this process disclosed, and all the filthiness of a Sugar House laid open to public view, I believe it would be still more disgusting than the picture I have drawn. But

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as I am not sufficiently informed to perform this task, I must beg leave to decline it. Those who are better qualified, may perhaps take the hint.

I shall therefore leave my Readers to ruminate seriously on what they have just been perusing, and hope that from motives of cleanliness, as well as humanity, they will see the necessity of abstaining from West India Sugar: A conduct that will not only redound to their own honor and profit, but may prove in the issue conducive to the liberating of thousands and millions of their fellow creatures from the galling yoke of Slavery.

And as to the various mixed liquids, and other nasty ingredients of which Rum is made, I will only say it is impossible to conceive any thing more abominably filthy and disgusting; though to be sure it may with some propriety be objected, that every thing of this kind is intirely done away in the operation of the Still. But how far this is strictly true, remains yet to be proved; and I have neither inclination nor leisure to do it; and shall therefore conclude this Address, by relating the following Anecdote, the truth of which I have no reason to doubt. A Wine-merchant having imported a quantity of Rum from Jamaica, one Puncheon proved exceeding fine, of a very pleasant and delicious flavour; and was eagerly bought up by all his customers. The rest not proving near so good, he wrote immediately to his correspondent, to know the reason why he had sent him two kinds of Spirits, and the largest quantity so much inferior to the other? and begged he might have more of the best. The answer returned was, that the Rum sent, was all made the same season, and all equally good; and if he found any difference in one Puncheon, more than others, it must be owing to its being in a seasoned Cask. This was immediately looked at, and found to be a new one; but curiosity wishing to look a little farther, the
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head was knocked out, and behold, the whole body of a roasted Negro lay stretched out, and fastened down in the bilge of the Cask, opposite the bung-hole. At the sight of which, neither the Wine-merchant, nor his customers, wished to have any more of the best sort. Now far be it from me to insinuate from hence, that any such methods are used to meliorate West India Rum; I will only take upon me to affirm, as a certain fact, that the Carcase of a Dog, Cat, Sheep, Goat, Man or Woman, thoroughly burnt, and put in the bottom of a large vessel, full of Spirits of any kind, will greatly tend to meliorate and soften them. But whether there exist such indelicate wretches, who from avaricious motives are capable of doing this, I leave to my Readers to determine, and to ruminate on what they have read.

N. B. The anecdote of the Negro found in the Rum Cask was related to me as a fact; and accounted for as follows: The Black Cooper on the Plantation quarrelled with a Negro Boy that attended him, and in his passion, struck him with his adze on the temple, and killed him, without intending it; but dreading a severe punishment, he endeavoured to conceal the murder by burning the body, but finding it did not consume fast enough to answer his purpose, he immediately put it into the Puncheon he was making, fastened it down in the bilge of the cask, headed it up instantly, rolled it himself to the Sugar house, and saw it filled with Rum.

An acquaintance of mine in this city, who, a very few years back worked in a Sugar House in London, positively affirms, as an undoubted fact, to which he was an eye-witness, that one day, as they started a Hogshead of moist Sugar, they found the Skeleton of a Child in the midst of it; the flesh was mostly eat off the bones, by the corroding nature of the Sugar.

Rochester, Mar. 14, 1792.

ANDREW BURN.



